

**DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY**

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A Message from Director Richard Oppen

Welcome to the Montana Department of Environmental Quality's American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) website. Our agency has an enormous responsibility to make sure that ARRA dollars are invested wisely in Montana. The Department of Environmental Quality will be overseeing recovery projects that help lower energy use in state buildings and promote energy efficiency and conservation, reduce emissions from diesel engines, clean up leaking underground tanks, and provide upgrades to community drinking water and wastewater systems. These projects will create jobs while helping the DEQ better fulfill its mission of protecting, sustaining,

and improving a clean and healthful environment.

These funds are being provided by Congress to jumpstart a sagging economy, create new jobs, and invest in the projects that protect human health and the environment. We at DEQ are committed to an open, public, and visible process. We have created this website so that you can see how your tax dollars are being invested. Please check back often because we will be adding new information all the time.

Our staff is currently gathering data, reviewing plans, and

**Director Richard Oppen**

identifying the opportunities that will be available as a result of these new federal dollars coming to Montana. We will be making our investment decisions quickly but carefully. We're up against some very tight deadlines, but we will not sacrifice public health or environmental safeguards to meet them. We hope you use this site to track our progress on good projects across the state, putting people to work, and making needed improvements in Montana's infrastructure.

And, as always, I am interested in what you think about how we are doing our jobs here at the DEQ. I welcome your comments, questions and suggestions.

Richard Oppen
Director
Montana DEQ

**DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY****State Energy Program**

The ARRA provides funds to assist in preparing and implementing comprehensive state energy conservation plans (State Energy Programs), pursuant to the Energy Policy and Conservation Act of 1975.

The ARRA conditions grants to a state upon certification by the governor that:

1. the state utility commission will implement policies that ensure the state-regulated electric and gas utilities have appropriate financial incentives to help their customers reduce energy use (i.e., the "decoupling" of a utility's revenues from energy consumption); and
2. the state, or the applicable unit of local government, will implement energy codes for residential and commercial buildings that meet or exceed certain conservation and efficiency standards. States also are required to prioritize funding to energy efficiency and renewable energy projects, such as building retrofits.

Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grants

The ARRA will provide grants to states and local governments to develop and implement energy efficiency and conservation strategies. The Department of Energy will distribute the funds to states participating in the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grants Program. The distribution formula and the amount that will be granted to the Montana DEQ is not known at this time.

Funding can be used to conduct energy audits, perform energy efficiency retrofits, implement more efficient energy distribution technologies, develop or install renewable energy technologies, and incentivize energy efficiency improvements in the private sector. Grantees may use up to the greater of 20 percent or \$250,000 of funds to establish revolving loan funds and the same amount to provide subgrants to assisting non-government organizations.

Applicants must provide DOE with a proposed energy efficiency and conservation strategy within one year of receiving funding. DOE must approve the proposed plan within 120 days or return it to the community for revision. Grantees must provide DOE with a report detailing the implementation of its Energy Efficiency and Conservation Strategy, as well as realized energy efficiency gains, no later than two years after the date on which funds were initially provided.

Clean Diesel

- ☒ Replacing Old School Buses - What School Districts Should Consider





DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

Water Quality

State Revolving Fund Water Quality Planning

SRF March 3, 2009 Press Release

DEQ Accepting Comments on Economic Stimulus Funds for Drinking Water and Water Pollution Control Programs

Helena The Montana Department of Environmental Quality is accepting public comments on Proposed Project Priority Lists and Intended Use Plans for American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funds for the Water Pollution Control and Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (SRF) programs.

The Intended Use Plans (IUPs) identify the intended uses of funds in the loan programs and describe how the goals of the programs will be satisfied. The Proposed Project Priority Lists (PPLs) identify projects that are eligible to be funded with loan money appropriated to Montana by the ARRA.

A public hearing will be held in Helena on Friday, March 20, 2009, at 1:00 p.m. in Room 111 of the Metcalf Building, at 1520 East Sixth Ave., to consider the plans and lists. Copies of the Intended Use Plans, which contain the Priority Lists, may be obtained from the DEQ Planning, Prevention and Assistance Division, PO Box 200901, Helena, Montana 59620-0901, telephone (406) 444-6697 or on the DEQ web site at: <http://www.deq.mt.gov/wqinfo/srf/iup-ppl.asp>.

Oral or written comments on the Priority List or Intended Use Plans may be presented at the public hearing or sent to Mark Smith, Drinking Water Revolving Fund Program Manager, marks@mt.gov or Paul LaVigne, Water Pollution Control Revolving Fund Program Manager, plavigne@mt.gov, PO Box 200901, Helena, Montana 59620-0901. Communities wanting to add their proposed drinking water or water pollution control projects to the Project Priority List should complete and submit the SRF survey form available at the website noted above. These comments and surveys must be received by 5:00 p.m. Wednesday, April 3, 2009 for the Water Pollution Control SRF Program and Friday, April 6, 2009 for the Drinking Water SRF Program.

It is important to note that the ARRA funds are for eligible projects that are clearly ready to begin construction this construction season. In the vast majority of cases, if a project is not well into the design process, with all other funding secure at this time, it will not be considered for addition to the Priority Lists.

The intent of the DEQ is to be conservative in the selection of which projects will receive these funds so that neither the project nor the program will be required to forfeit funds if a project is not under construction in the time required in the law. If all selected projects begin construction as required in the ARRA, Montana could be allocated an additional grant in one year, at which time the DEQ hopes to be able to fund additional projects.

The DEQ will make reasonable accommodations for persons with disabilities who wish to participate in this hearing. If you need an accommodation, please contact the department no later than March 17, 2009, to advise us of your need. Please contact Carol Gilmore, phone (406) 444-4643; fax (406) 444-6836; email cgilmore@mt.gov.



DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

Remediation/Restoration

Stimulus Helps Plug Leaking Underground Storage Tank Program

The Leaking Underground Storage Tank (LUST) Trust program, which falls under the Remediation Division of the Montana DEQ, is expecting to receive approximately \$1.3 million from the American Recovery and Reinvestment funds. The program conducts investigation and remediation activities at release sites that threaten human health and the environment where:

1. the release source is unknown or
2. the tank owner is unable or unwilling to perform the work themselves, or
3. in response to catastrophic high-risk sites where the DEQ determines that the state actions are necessary to address immediate risks to human health or the environment.

The LUST program:

- ② investigates unidentified sources of petroleum contamination such as contaminated drinking water wells, petroleum free product floating on water bodies, or petroleum vapors entering buildings and utilities;
- ② conducts necessary investigations and cleanups of underground storage tank releases where an owner or operator does not exist, or is unable to conduct the work themselves;
- ② conducts necessary investigations and cleanups of underground storage tank releases as part of an enforcement action where an owner or operator is unwilling to conduct the work themselves;





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